

The Evolution of the Syria Conflict

Every war comes from a conflict, and the increasingly rampant conflict in Syria has people all over the world upset and eager to get involved. The Syrian civil war started over conflict of those for and those against Bashar al-Assad's presidency, and it has escalated quickly in the past five years. Assad is the current president of Syria and the commander-in-chief of the Syrian armed forces. He became president in the year 2000 following the death of his father, Hafez al-Assad. In mid-March of 2011, anti-government protests broke out in Deraa, a city in southwestern Syria, after many people became upset with policemen who arrested fifteen schoolchildren for painting anti-government graffiti on the walls of a school building. They believed these arrests were in direct connection to the Assad presidency, and an already upset populous became even more frustrated with their government.

Assad almost immediately had military forces going after the many people responsible for the anti-government protests. By mid-May, about one thousand protesters were dead. People began fighting back and trying to defend themselves from the president's ruthless army of loyalist soldiers. People fighting against Mr. Assad and the loyalists took over northern and eastern parts of the country as well as launching offenses against Syrian cities Damascus and Aleppo, which, in the past, had been two of Syria's most important cities.

By the end of 2012, the death toll had passed 60,000. However, by the beginning of 2013, things were starting to look up for President Bashar al-Assad. Offensives to recover lost territory were launched by government forces, and Hezbollah-a militant group based in Lebanon, sent members of its military to help fight the rebellious protesters. The war continued, and in the

spring of 2015, the president began to lose control once again when the government was struck with a series of losses to newer rebel coalitions in the north and south of Syria.

Over the span of the war, different countries have played different roles in the fight between the president and the rebels. Countries such as Russia and Iran are in support of the president and have been from the very beginning, whereas countries such as Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and the United States oppose Assad completely, some even helping the rebels at times.

Since the start of the war, about 11 million Syrians have fled their homes. Now, 13.5 million are in desperate need of assistance. While some have decided to remain in Syria, most have fled to various places around the world. Various countries are continuing to try and help Syria find peace, many sending necessities such as food and emergency supplies to the refugees as well. The United States and Britain were supplying aid for the refugees for awhile, but both eventually stopped in fear that it would only be stolen by rebel groups. Despite constant efforts made by good citizens all over the world to make peace and end the treacherous fight, it unfortunately looks as though this war still has a long way to go and many more lives to take before the end.